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Our present policy is aimed at the identification and support of a viable alternative to Duvalier and the ultimate dislodgement of the Duvalier regime is favor of such alternative. Our present target date for the completion of this operation is next May, at which time Duvalier's first "elected" term of office expires. (We have never recognized the second "election" at which he extended his term.)

Among the reasons we feel it necessary to dislodge Duvalier are the following:

1. Some of the key people around Duvalier are ultra-nationalist, anti-U.S. and have communist backgrounds. There is every indication that their influence is increasing. We also believe that they are quietly, and under the very severe limitations of Duvalier's ingrained suspicions of everyone, trying to increase their authority within the government, militia, etc.; hoping to take over when Duvalier goes. The longer that he hangs on the more likely they may be to succeed.
2. There is some indication of increasing communist activity in the country. There is no doubt that the longer this repressive regime continues the greater the potential communist strength.
3. Our support of Duvalier, inevitably strengthens the hands of those elements of the opposition which are anti-US in orientation.
4. We are convinced that it is hopeless to try to work with Duvalier. He is indifferent to the social and economic welfare of his people, intoxicated with brutality and repressions, unaware or indifferent to the possibility of ultimate communist rule, and hostile to our guidance or advice. All efforts to work with him have met resistance and there seems to be no realistic hope that things will get better in the future.
5. A US role in dislodging Duvalier would, of course, help us with other democratic forces in the Caribbean area and be another significant step in upsetting the old "friendly to dictators" picture which still prevails although lessened by the DR events.

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UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD WE TRY TO DISLODGE DUVALIER WITHOUT A FAIRLY CLEAR IDEA WHO WOULD REPLACE HIM.

Thus we must use the next year to identify the alternative.

1. The CIA, FBI and INR have completed a dossier of promising Haitian exiles and visible resistance figures from which we are trying to select those most likely to be capable of heading a successor government.

2. We are trying to substantially increase our intelligence on Haiti. [REDACTED]

1.5(c)
3.4(b)(1)

[REDACTED] Hard as it is to believe, we know far less about Haiti under Duvalier than we knew about the Dominican Republic under Trujillo.

3. Identification of an alternative is the primary mission of our Embassy.

While this is going on we will be publicly cool toward Duvalier and conduct normal personal and private contacts. We are most anxious not to do anything which will precipitate his departure before we are ready. On the other hand a cool public posture, with occasional mild acts of hostility, are essential if we are to encourage the tentative emergence of an opposition and make them willing to be in touch with us.

If we are ready next May it is probable that we will be able to get rid of Duvalier. We are studying plans for this now. The most promising approach would be the withdrawal of recognition at the time when his term expires. This would have a juridical base and we could probably get some other countries (e.g., Venezuela and Colombia) to go along with us. This complete severing of relations on the part of the US and others would make his fall almost inevitable.

I want to stress that this is now a probing operation. We do not intend to move decisively unless and until we feel that we have reasonable control over the future course of events.

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